

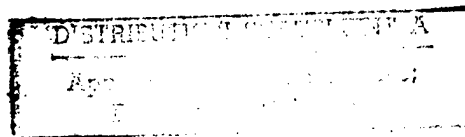


FULL INTEGRATION OF WOMEN
IN THE AIR FORCE:
MYTH OR POSSIBILITY?

Helen M. Newell, 1st Lieutenant, USAF

AFIT/GIM/LAC/98S-4

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THESIS

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of Logistics and Acquisition Management of the
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Helen M. Newell

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Abstract

The full integration of women in the military, particularly the United States Air Force, has been an ongoing effort. Based on the definition of "full integration" as allowing all qualified military personnel the opportunity to hold any position and accomplish any mission, given that they are in possession of the required capabilities and training, without restriction, certain issues have arisen during the course of the integration process. These issues include sex, as defined by gender and function, the capability of women to accomplish the same tasks as men, and the combat issue. To support and establish the full integration of women in the Air Force, qualifying standards must be met by females as well as males without lowering standards to fill desired quotas or political agendas. If this is undertaken, the capabilities and combat-readiness of females will not be an issue. Non-professional personal relations must be monitored and aggressive steps taken to prevent them when they interfere with mission accomplishment.

FULL INTEGRATION OF WOMEN

IN THE AIR FORCE:

MYTH OR POSSIBILITY?

I. Introduction

General Issue

In 1948, the Women's Armed Services Integration Act allowed women to serve with men in the services (62 Statute 356-75). Before this, women served in segregated military units such as the Women's Army Corps (WAC), Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP), and the Army Nursing Corps. Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) "were the first to handle new military aircraft on long-distance flights and to discover if they had flaws" since they ferried the aircraft from the factories to the ports and even participated in the training of male pilots (Jones, 1997: 244). The Women's Armed Services Integration Act, in 1948, authorized female enlistment and commissioning in the regular Air Force. There were some stipulations. These included the requirements that parental consent was necessary for women to enlist before the age of twenty-one, that women could make up no more than two percent of any service, and that they could not exceed the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

In 1948, women were allowed to serve with men for the first time outside of the contingency situations of war. This measure signified a radical change at

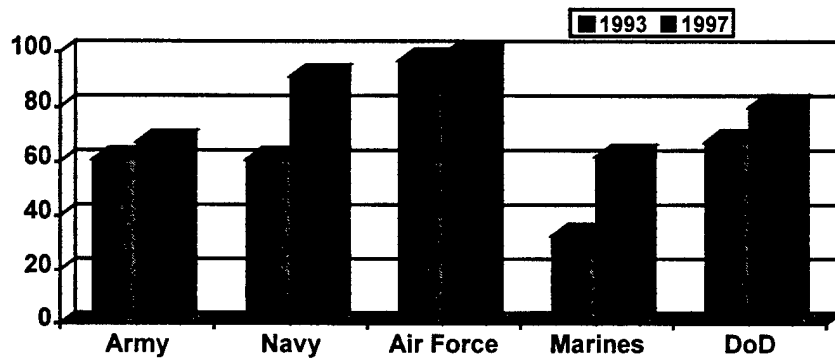


Figure 1. Percentage of Positions Open to Women (Harrell & Miller, 1997)

the time, even if there were limits on how women could serve their country. In 1967, the Women Officer's Act (Public Law 90-130) removed the two percent limit on the number of female officers in the military and the promotion ceiling. It was not until 1974 that women were allowed to enlist at the age of eighteen without parental consent.

Within the last fifty years, the role of women in the military and particularly the Air Force has evolved from temporary service requirements and severely limited positions of the early World War II era to the current fully-voluntary force. Currently 99.7% of Air Force positions are available to women (Harrell & Miller, 1997:12). A few positions are still not open to women in the Air Force as depicted in Figure 1.

The House Committee on Armed Services requested a study on personnel force composition in 1985. Its conclusions were that of all the services, "the Air Force is...the service with the greatest potential to fully integrate women in their

ranks because it has fewer positions that are subject to combat exclusions" (Report to HCAS, 1985).

Specific Problem Statement

Since the legislation was first passed allowing women into the regular Air Force, there has been a push towards women's full integration. This thesis investigates the primary issues involved in achieving full integration of women. These primary issues are defined by the frequency that they're studied as well as their impact on gender integration. Full integration of women in the Air Force signifies the achievement of a fully standardized, mission-ready force. A fully standardized force is one in which all personnel are capable (through required, standard training) of accomplishing the mission required of them, depending on the positions to which they are assigned.

Investigative Questions

The investigative questions to be answered during the course of this research relate directly to the research problem. These include:

1. What is meant by the term "full integration" in regards to the assimilation of women into the ranks?
2. What have certain previous studies, conducted mostly after the Desert Storm/Desert Shield deployment, concluded about the status of women in the military, particularly the Air Force?

3. What are the issues surrounding the full integration of women, in the Air Force, as defined within the context of this thesis?
4. How are these issues affecting full integration efforts?

Scope of Research

This examination is limited to an examination of conditions in the Air Force, as each military branch has differing regulations and requirements for women. The Air Force has traditionally been the branch with more support than combat positions. Certain sources are addressed in the scope of this report to enable conclusions and recommendations to be made. These take the form of:

1. Air Force directives, laws, and regulations,
2. A representative sampling of previous research on women in the military, and
3. Media reports on women in the military.

Thesis Organization

Chapter I has provided background information for the study, identified the problem, and detailed the scope of the issues.

Chapter II outlines the methodology used to garner and analyze the data.

Chapter III reviews the legislation depicting the introduction of women into the ranks, previous studies on issues affecting full integration, and the primary issues affecting full integration efforts.

Chapter IV establishes the primary issues and depicts how these issues are affecting integration. It also assesses the current level of integration.

Chapter V provides a synopsis of the answers to the investigative questions. It also discusses other findings on the future of the integration of women in the Air Force. Recommendations are given based on the research.

II. Methodology

Overview

This chapter describes the methodology used to gather and analyze the data related to issues on full integration of women in the Air Force. Numerous reports have appeared in the media on military women from the period following Desert Storm/Desert Shield to the present. The majority of these reports deal with controversial issues that have been the cause of the implementation of certain legal initiatives to respond to problems arising from these issues. Because this research deals with the progress of integration of women in the Air Force, a study of reports that relate to women in the Air Force is useful in identifying key issues. A content and textual analysis of Air Force directives, training standards, published articles, and other media reports is also conducted.

Data Sources

Any research conducted is based on primary research, secondary research, or a combination of the two (Gibaldi, 1995:2). Primary sources involve the reporting on a subject through firsthand observation or investigation, while secondary sources involve the analysis of reports that others have made on the same subject (Gibaldi, 1995:2). This thesis is based on a combination of primary and secondary sources.

Primary data sources for this study include full-text speeches in written form and first-hand accounts, written and oral, related to the research subject.

Background sources that include legal directives and regulations are secondary sources for this study. Legal directives include public laws and Air Force directives for personnel goals. Public laws such as the Women's Armed Services Integration Act and the Women Officer's Act are textually analyzed in this context. Air Force directives establishing desired force requirements are also subject to textual analysis. Other secondary data sources are published sources to include books, articles, and videotaped documentaries.

Research Plan

This research examines the issues affecting the full integration of women in the Air Force following Desert Storm/Desert Shield. To understand the scope of integration, a history of legislation establishing the foundation for the current status of women is reviewed. An analysis of the data from the primary and secondary data sources is then conducted meant to elicit the primary issues of this research. Investigative questions are answered based on the analysis resulting in conclusions and recommendations. In short, the research plan follows this scheme:

1. Define the methodology used,
2. Answer investigative questions through an analysis of data on required standards and issues affecting subject, and
3. Make conclusions and recommendations based on analysis.

III. Historical Issues

Introduction

This chapter addresses the definition of full integration. It also reviews applicable studies pertaining to the issue of the integration of women in the Air Force. First, the term “full integration” is defined. Then a legislative history is summarized. This begins with pertinent legislation from 1948 to the present. Following the legislative review is a discussion of studies on gender-integration and related issues.

Definition

The term “integration” refers to an availability of opportunity to all without restriction (American Heritage Dictionary: 3rd Ed.). In the past, the term “integration” has been used more in terms of race than gender. Richard Newman proposes that lessons learned from racial integration efforts would be helpful in solving today’s gender problems (Newman, 1997). Newman focuses on the Army in his article and points out that “gender discrimination is sometimes fueled by the belief that women degrade a unit’s performance.” This belief originates from the perception that women are incapable of accomplishing the same tasks in the same capacity as their male counterparts. Racial integration was supported as a motivational factor for Black soldiers as well as a more efficient proposal for the military’s organizational system – one chain of command instead of two (Newman, 1997). Gender integration, however, has an

added obstacle – sex. In integrating the races, race was not seen as a debilitating factor in a soldier's performance. Yet, gender integration raises another set of considerations. These include pregnancy rates, the ability of women to accomplish jobs requiring a high level of physical capacity, and the issue of deploying women with men for extended periods.

There have been differing views from prominent people in their respective fields on gender integration. Robert Livingston, Republican from Louisiana, head of the House Appropriations Committee overseeing military spending, believes that "the complete integration of men and women in all aspects of military life has proven to be a disaster" (Schmitt, 1996). This comment was made after the incidents of sexual abuses in the Army were uncovered earlier that same year in 1996. Mady Wechsler Segal, a sociologist at the University of Maryland, adopted a more solution-seeking attitude when she testified before a House Judiciary subcommittee in 1983. She said, "if the goal in the military is to find the best fit between job requirements and individual abilities, then individuals should be selected for jobs on the basis of those abilities, not gender" (Schmitt, 1996). Madeleine Morris, a law professor at Duke University, agreed with Segal. She argued that it was "improbable that we will see a full transition in gender and sexual norms in the military as long as rules remain excluding women from a range of combat positions" (Schmitt, 1996). Inequality will exist if there is exclusion of any sort. To have full integration, equality or an overriding perception of equality must be present.

One definition of gender integration basically states that it is “defined as the presence of women in the military, across a variety of occupations” (Herbert, 1994: 5). The military and feminists have used this definition. It doesn’t define integration to the extent that this research defines it.

For the purposes of this thesis, “full integration” is allowing all military personnel the opportunity to hold any position and accomplish any mission, given that they are in possession of the required capabilities and training for that mission, without restriction. This definition takes the previous definition one step further in that it goes beyond the “presence” of women in the military. The research definition includes references to a sufficiency in qualifications (i.e. training), a definitive parameter for the occupations that women should have access to, and allowable restrictions.

Legislation

The Women Armed Services Integration Act enacted in 1948 was a restrictive law for women. It was public recognition that women could work side by side with men, yet it reflected the traditional thinking of the times when women were restricted to certain roles and positions. Besides the limitations listed in Chapter I, dependents (husbands and children) could not be claimed by service women unless they were the chief source of support (62 Stat. 356-75). The United States Supreme Court ruled, in 1973, that the dependents of military women could receive the same entitlements offered for dependents of military men (Frontiero vs. Richardson). One year later, the fiscal 1975 Defense Authorization

Bill (Public Law 93-290) allowed women to enlist at the age of 18 without parental consent. In 1975, the Stratton Amendment to the fiscal 1976 defense authorization bill opened the Air Force as well as the Navy and Army academies to women (Public Law 94-106).

After 1975, the legislation mainly dealt with combat issues. Up to this point, it was generally understood that any position that entailed combat was not open to servicewomen. In 1978, legislation was passed allowing women to serve on Navy ships and do temporary duty on warships not on combat missions (Public Law 95-485). The Defense Department adopted the "risk rule" in 1988. The "risk rule" excluded women from non-combat units or jobs if there was a risk of exposure to direct combat, hostile fire, or capture. It stated:

Risk of direct combat, exposure to hostile fire/capture are proper criteria for closing positions to women. If the type, degree, and, to a "lesser extent", duration of risk are equal to or greater than direct combat units (infantry/armor), then units or positions may be closed to women. (Task Force Report, 1988)

A distinction was further made in terms of ground combat versus other types of combat. Direct combat was defined as "taking place while closing with the enemy by fire, maneuver, or shock effect to destroy or capture or while repelling assault by fire, close combat, or counterattack" (Task Force Report, 1988).

Ground combat units were still off limits to women, but combat planes in the Air Force and Navy were opened to women in 1991 (Public Law 102-190). The ban was also lifted allowing women to serve aboard combat ships (Public Law 103-160). Congress had to be given notice, however, when the policy was changed in the services. In October 1993, Les Aspin, then Secretary of Defense, repealed

the "risk rule." A new definition of ground combat replaced the former as well. Ground combat was then defined as that which "bars women that engage the enemy with weapons on the ground while exposed to hostile fire and that involve substantial probability of direct physical contact with hostile forces" (Peach, 1996, 158). Boussy explained Aspin's rationale as arguing that women could no longer be excluded from combat positions "simply because they [the military services] are trying to protect women from the ravages of war" (Boussy, 1996: 42). Certain tactical warfare positions are still not opened to women in the Air Force.

Literature Review

In this section, studies are reviewed for evidence of relevant issues bearing on "full integration." The studies summarized have mainly been in the conducted from the mid-1980s to the late 1990s. There was a major impetus to conduct studies on women in combat after Desert Storm, mainly because women were involved in combat. Defense Secretary Dick Cheney and General Norman Schwarzkopf both lauded the accomplishments of women during that period. The performance of the women prompted the passage of other laws related to women in combat, including lifting the ban on women flying combat aircraft in 1991 and the repeal of the Risk Rule in 1993 (Peach, 1996: 159).

To appreciate the gains experienced by women in the last several years; it is useful to review the improvements they have experienced since World War II. As Judith Stiehm has noted, after World War II, women were seen as "token women" because there was so much resistance to recruitment after World War II.

Certain gender-specific items needed to be incorporated into military policy and procedures once women were admitted into the military such as pelvic exams for women in entrance physicals, residential arrangements, and how the issues of pregnancy should be addressed. Prior to World War II, pelvic exams hadn't been conducted since they weren't necessary for men, there was a high level of "anxiety about the safety and virtue of military women," and immediate discharge was the only rule for pregnancy (Stiehm, 1985).

Since the end of World War II, there have been changes as well as an ongoing public debate on the full integration of women in the armed forces. This debate as well as changes have prompted and been influenced by studies on the subject as well as discussions in Congress. In 1985, Judith Stiehm examined the evaluation of women in the military since World War II. She refers to women in the military as "token women" since they couldn't be used in combat and there was resistance to their recruitment after World War II. The military resisted gender integration due to three main concerns: fitness, physical strength, and pregnancy. Men and women entering the military have to complete basic training, which included physical training and tests. Physical training was always seen "as a tool for the development of unit cohesion and discipline" (Stiehm, 1985: 209), and the Air Force's principle of standardization served to demonstrate the high regard in which unit cohesion and discipline were seen. Since women were first permitted to serve in 1948, standardization has been an integral part of the Air Force's gender-integrated training policy. Residential

arrangements have been the only segregated portion of the Air Force training program outside of the specific physical requirements.

The Air Force was also the first to implement strength tests at its examining and entrance Stations in January 1976, prior to an enlistee arriving for training. The tests determined enlistees' capability to accomplish certain strength-related tasks. Strength tests were based on the premise that all jobs required a certain level of strength for which all personnel (women and men) were tested. Stiehm notes that there had not been any analyses made of how reduced physical strength might be balanced by other factors such as education, for instance. She claims that strength tests were "being used to reduce opportunities for women" (Stiehm, 1985: 222). Because soldiers were required to carry more than the clothes on their backs during times of war including backpacks, weapons, and even incapacitated fellow soldiers that may have to be carried, strength tests are valid measurements.

Pregnancy has always been a volatile topic. During World War II, pregnant women were discharged immediately. The issue wasn't a factor except when the female that was pregnant was unmarried. By 1975, discharge became voluntary.

Pregnancy has also been the primary factor in women's "unavailability for work and attrition" (Stiehm, 1985: 229). Readiness and effectiveness are affected when any member of the unit is unable to perform his or her normal duties and the unit must still accomplish the same mission as usual.

Stiehm concludes that fitness is not a special problem for women. Pregnancy is, however, since it affects the woman, her coworkers, the unit, and overall

mission accomplishment. Physical strength testing is a recommended course of action especially when there are jobs such as warehouse workers, which may require heavy lifting.

After Desert Storm/Desert Shield, the issue of a woman's ability to function in emotionally as well as physically demanding environments was revisited with increased interest. Other than the tangible measures of physical fitness and pregnancy rates, attitudes were studied regarding women in the military. Hurrell and Lukens conducted a 1995 study on the attitudes toward women in the military (Hurrell and Lukens, 1995: 1263-1266). In the study, a scale was developed called the Women in Military Scale. The scale was based on three factors – gender equality, maternity, and family role and combat. Hurrell and Lukens admitted that the reliability of the scale could be affected by the “subject’s attitudes towards the military in general.” One hundred twenty-seven undergraduate women enrolled in psychology courses constituted the sample for the study (Hurrell and Lukens, 1995: 1264-1266). They were students at the College of New Rochelle where Hurrell taught in the Psychology Department. This may be the cause of some bias, because that institution is an all-girls, historically catholic, college, and no males were included in the sample. Also, all the respondents were volunteer students in a psychology program. In terms of race and ethnicity of the respondents, a more representative sampling was taken. The breakdown was as follows: 54.3% - White; 18.1% - Black; 12.6% - Hispanic; 3.1% - Asian; 11.8% - no racial/ethnic background given.

The respondents were given 12 statements.

1. Women in the military are as capable as men in carrying out wartime assignments and responsibilities
2. Women's roles as wives and mothers make them less well suited than men for the military.
3. Women in the military should not be assigned to active combat duty.
4. Women have as much to offer in the military service of their country as men.
5. Women who are in the military should not have children.
6. Women have the same capacity for military leadership as men.
7. If reinstated, both men and women should be subject to the draft.
8. Having children should not be an obstacle to a woman contemplating the military as a career.
9. A woman in the military should not be given an assignment which separates her from her children.
10. Women can perform as well as men in all facets of the military.
11. In time of war, military women who have children should be excused from duty, which places them under physical threat.
12. Men are better suited than women for combat (Hurrell and Lukens, 1995:1265).

Their responses were based on a 7-point scale (1-strongly disagree, 7-strongly agree). Each of these 12 statements was assigned to a category or factor

(Hurrell and Lukens, 1995: 1265). The three factors, gender equality, maternity, and family role and combat were isolated as a result of factor analysis on results of the study. Attitudes towards women in the military by the respondents were reflected in these categories. Results of the study depicted the respondents' belief that there was an equal competence between men and women in the military. Yet, due to women's roles as wives and mothers, the respondents also felt that women should not be exposed to any undue threat that direct combat might cause.

Besides the threat to traditional roles of women as wives and mothers, there have also been other reservations on the Women in Combat issue. Lucinda Peach wrote on three ethical positions that oppose women in combat. They were the accountability ethic, the ethic of care, and the justice ethic. The accountability ethic advocates the need for military efficiency, effectiveness, and troop safety, which aren't possible with women in the ranks. Women's participation in war would have a deleterious effect on combat readiness since they are physically and psychologically unfit for combat. The justice ethic is based on the principles of equal rights and responsibilities, equal protection under the laws, and basic fairness. Basically, it states that women should be treated the same as men since they are "essentially the same as men" (Peach, 1996: 177). The ethic of care orients women more towards peace than war. Women's instinctive morals will severely incapacitate them in a wartime arena and their inherent roles as peace workers are antithetical to combat roles. Peach

concludes “gender-biased assumptions about the nature of men and women in relation to war and combat are dominant” in each of these ethical discussions.

Another study, “Guarding Against Women,” analyzed the responses of military men and their wives to integration (Hertz, 1996: 251). The military male respondents were members of the security career field, specifically base security. When Congress, in 1985, mandated an increase in the percentage of women admitted into the military, the Air Force chose to convert a combat career field into a peacetime, non-combat one. If war did break out, however, the career field would return to its former classification. The author, Rosanna Hertz, saw this as a perfect opportunity to examine “the dynamics of gender in an institution conspicuous for its practice of sex segregation” (Hertz, 1996: 252). Information was gathered mainly through interviews conducted at two Air Force bases in the eastern United States, where the security police squadrons were similar. Similarities between the two bases included the size and shift schedules of the security police squadrons. During the course of gathering the information for this study, the researchers came upon certain factors, which potentially led to bias. Factors leading to bias were:

1. The median age for husbands and wives in the sample was twenty-four (the median age, at the time, for Air Force security guards on a national scale was between eighteen and twenty-two),
2. A high school diploma was the highest degree that the majority of respondents had, and
3. All the interviewers were women.

The researchers found that all the men and women interviewed did not support the integration of women into the security field. Some of the reasons included:

1. Respondents saw more leniency in the treatment of women over men,
2. A devaluation of the historically male position ("now even women can do it"),
3. Possible sexual relations between men and women working together,
4. Belief that women are incapable of defending themselves and their country as well as men due to size and physical limitations,
5. Belief that women will not be accepted into the camaraderie of the unit, and
6. With the combat restrictions on what women can do, there will be no equality, which will not lead to full integration.

The prior findings allude to the basic issues that hinder gender-integration. These basic issues are the capability of women to perform the same job as men, the high potential for unprofessional and/or sexual relations, and limitations placed on which roles women can assume. Researchers King and Voge conducted a survey of Army and Air Force aircrew on their opinions of relations between their male and female counterparts (King and Voge, 1997:879-885). Opinions of the rated female aircrew were compared with those of rated male aircrew. The questionnaires were mailed to selected aircrew members in 1993. These selected members were matched (one male member with one female member) according to age and flight duty. The questionnaire consisted of 189 questions, mainly requiring yes/no responses with room for extended responses

as well. The questionnaire was “tested and retested 5 times...to determine any subjective biases...and areas of concern” (King and Voge, 1997:880). These are some of the results of the survey:

1. 17% of Air Force women compared to 3% of Air Force men believed that they were treated unequally,
2. Women believed that they didn’t receive the same opportunities as men due to the combat exclusion clause, while men believed that women received more breaks because of their gender and their not being held to as high a standard as men,
3. 66% of Air Force women believed that they had to perform to a higher standard than Air Force men,
4. 33% of Air Force women believed they had been denied a job because of gender, while only 4% of Air Force men felt the same, and
5. More Air Force women than men claimed to be prepared to be POWs – 72% vs. 70%.

The researchers concluded that there was a difference in the perception of “the ability of men and women to function in a mixed squadron because of their gender” (King and Voge, 1997: 884). They agreed that through training, policy changes, and an acceptance of these differences, these perceptions could be modified.

RAND’s National Defense Research Institute conducted a study on the availability of opportunities for women, the progress of gender integration, and how readiness, cohesion, and morale were affected by gender integration

(Harrell and Miller, 1997:5). The study examined the change in the number of positions opened to women from 1993 to 1997 (Figure 1). In every service except the Air Force there was a dramatic increase. The Air Force had the highest percentage at the outset: the percentage of positions available to women increased from 97% to 99.4%. This increase was mainly caused by permitting women to fly combat aircraft (Harrell and Miller, 1997:14-15). The positions that are still closed to women are in fields that are not "critical to an individual's career enhancement" (Harrell and Miller, 1997:15). Harrell and Miller concluded that the transition of women into previously restricted combat fields was easier for the Air Force for four reasons (Harrell and Miller, 1997: 17):

1. The majority of Air Force positions were already open to Air Force women,
2. Modifications to aircraft and equipment to accommodate women were minimal compared to Navy ships,
3. The Air Force had an equitable, organized system already in place for selecting women for the newly opened combat positions, and
4. The remaining positions that are still restricted to women are not necessary stepping stones to advancement.

The Air Force was not included as part of the overall unit study as were the other military branches. There were no surveys of Air Force women in newly opened positions. The Air Force had six officer positions and one enlisted position in which restrictions were lifted for women. There were 26 female officers spread out among 22 units (Harrell & Miller, 1997: 104). The researchers thought that

these small numbers would eliminate all possibility of anonymity and confidentiality for the respondents and would not result in true and accurate data.

In a GAO report on gender integration in basic training, the degree of integration in units during basic training was examined to determine its effects on the performance of the trainees (Gebicke, 1997). For the Air Force, the flights were single gender and paired with a "brother" or "sister" flight. The pair of flights trained side by side and except when it came to medical exams, hygiene classes, and physical fitness standards were following the same program. At the time of the report, integrated training had been in effect for only a short period of time and there weren't enough records documenting trainee performance during this period. It was concluded that there was little data to suggest that performance was affected either positively or negatively by the integration efforts. A further recommendation was made to analyze data over a one-year period and provide another report at the end of that period ending fiscal year 1998 (Gebicke, 1997).

The Federal Advisory Committee on Gender-Integrated Training and Related Issues, led by Senator Nancy Kassebaum-Baker, accomplished the follow-up report. The committee recommended that male and female recruits should be housed and trained separately during basic training. The reasoning was that integrated housing led to more disciplinary problems and completely integrated training led to less discipline, less unit cohesion, and more distractions for the trainees (Maxwell, 1997).

Another report by the Defense Advisory Committee on Women In the Services (DACOWITS) recommended that more gender-integrated training was

needed in direct opposition to the Kassebaum-Baker panel findings.

"Professional development" and "work readiness" are impaired when segregation is enforced during training and in the barracks was the conclusion. Unity problems, DACOWITS found, also developed with limited interaction (Maxwell, 1998).

The previous studies have shown that there are certain primary issues that are controversial in the gender integration arena. One is the questioning of the capability of women to perform the same tasks as men (Hurrell and Lukens, 1995) (King and Voge, 1997) (Hertz, 1996). A second is the gender issue, which leads to problems such as sexual harassment, intimate relations that can be detrimental to a unit's performance, and considerations such as pregnancy. The third is the training issue. Inequitable training standards will lead to an inequity in perceptions if it is felt that standards are being lowered to promote the fulfillment of quotas. These three issues are discussed further in the following chapter.

IV. The Issues

Introduction

There are three primary issues involved in the concept of women's complete integration into the ranks. "Full integration" was earlier defined as allowing all qualified military personnel the opportunity to hold any position and accomplish any mission, given the requisite training and capabilities, without restriction. The issues are sex, as defined by gender and function, the capability of women to accomplish the same tasks as men, and the combat issue. Overshadowing all three of these issues are the traditional views of women as mainly taking care of the home and the offspring. The following are descriptions and analyses of the issues.

Sexual Interaction

In Hertz' study, the respondents believed that the camaraderie of the unit was irrevocably affected by the integration of women. That certain bond between males (that is created through an initiation period where your worth is proven and you undergo other shared experiences) is threatened by the arrival of women into the unit. They are seen as outsiders since they can't handle these same initiation rites and experiences as their male counterparts (Hertz, 1996: 265). Newcomers are always subject to some suspicion as the "unknown quantity" in any unit equation. Until their reactions can be in some way predicted, their

personalities determined, and some common ground found, they would continue to be the outsiders.

Language is also affected when women first arrive on the scene. The usual ribald stories that involve sexual exploits and other less than savory stories involving women are either made politically correct or not told. There is a traditional view of women as individuals with delicate sensibilities that will be offended easily.

Sexual relations may be unavoidable with women in the unit. Where sexual relations were usually saved for those periods when the male soldier was on leave, now the temptation would be present in the unit with the presence of female soldiers. Long deployments, where the members of the unit would be thrown together in close quarters for long periods of time, would also be overly conducive to sexual relations. The current Bosnia deployment is an example of such a long deployment. There, alcohol is forbidden and troops are restricted to their compound leaving fewer methods for diversion. Newsweek reported that "once every three days a woman has to be evacuated to Germany because she's pregnant" (Barry & Thomas, 1997: 48). Women have the added complications of pregnancy, if care isn't exercised in their sexual rendezvous. Besides the fact that women are incapable of accomplishing heavy physical duties while pregnant, there are the added costs to return them home if they are on deployment and to replace them with other qualified soldiers.

Then, there's the attitude of man's work versus woman's work. Opening up a historically male domain to women will seem to skew those traditional roles.

Resentment may be felt for this "invasion." A devaluation of the work is perceived when work, that a man has been extensively trained to do, is being done by a woman with comparatively less training.

Training

The question of whether a woman is as capable as a man is in accomplishing certain tasks is controversial. Some will say no and support this by pointing out traditional women's roles and the physical difficulty women have in training. Training standards are segregated to reflect a woman's lower tolerance for physical training. Factors such as upper body strength, height, and rate of injury are used to justify these lower standards. Yet, a woman's capabilities will constantly be called into question if the lower standards in comparison to men are perceived only as a means to further integration and quota fulfillment while sacrificing mission-readiness. Lieutenant General Trainor, USMC(Ret) is a supporter of the belief that there should be different standards for men and women. He stated that it's "smarter to recognize [women's] differences and accommodate them, rather than a one-size-fits-all fantasy" (Trainor, 1997:61).

At Officer Training School at Maxwell AFB, Alabama, the physical requirements needed to complete Basic Officer Training consist of differing requirements for males and females. Officer Trainees have to successfully pass a physical fitness test and complete a 1.5 mile run test (Physical Fitness).

Table 1. Physical Fitness and RunTest Standards

Events	Male		Female	
	MIN	MAX	MIN	MAX
Pull-Ups (reps)	4	19	N/A	N/A
Flex Arm Hangs (reps)	N/A	N/A	9	42
Long jump (feet)	83	104	60	84
Push-Up (reps)	30	70	9	37
Sit-Up (reps)	44	88	41	79
600-yard run (sec)	120	95	147	113

Run Test	Male	Female
29 yrs and under	14:24	12:00
30 yrs and over	14:52	12:30

Five physical fitness tests are administered throughout the Basic Training Course. The final test must be passed by all to graduate. Males and females must complete similar events except where the flex arm hang is substituted for the pull-ups for women. Otherwise, for the run test and the physical fitness test there are differing standards for men and women.

For enlistees in the Air Force, strength tests are performed prior to training to determine their suitability for certain positions (Stiehm, 1985: 214). In this measure, both male and female enlistees, are standardized. The Air Force was the first branch to implement this test. Officers are not required to take strength tests.

In favor of similar standards for men and women, Boussy pointed out that the battlefield cannot be gender-normed. "No one gets killed when the training standards are modified; the battlefield, however is not so accommodating" (Boussy, 1996: 43).

Recently, the subject of separating the sexes during training was called into question. The Senate voted to maintain the training standards of the different branches as they were and not order segregation of the sexes during training until further studies were completed (Maze, 1998: 6). The Air Force does not segregate any portion of training except for residential arrangements. Supporters of integrated training believe that recruits should train as they would be expected to work and fight (Government Executive, 1998).

Combat

In the Air Force, there are fewer combat positions than those for the other branches of the military. The capabilities of women in the Air Force are called into question, in terms of being combat-capable, less often as a result. Lieutenant General Fairfield spoke on the topic of Women in the Air Force. In his speech, he mentioned the Air Force's gender-neutral policy, which advocates the selection of the best-qualified person for the job at hand, regardless of gender (Fairfield, 1994: 39). The policy is based on worldwide deployability. Yet, can this policy overcome perceived problems from men and women living in close quarters for extended periods? Boussy cites such problems such as sexual misconduct and lack of privacy (Boussy, 1996: 43). High profile cases of sexual misconduct have permeated the news within the last few years drawing attention to this particular problem. However, cases have not been brought to light of incidents occurring in a deployment environment. Equal rights proponents continue to argue that "if women are capable of participating in [direct combat], it

is their right to do so" (Trainor, 1997: 62). It would be very difficult to prevent women from serving at this late stage of the integration process. Barry and Thomas claim that "without women, the armed services would not meet their recruiting quotas" (Barry and Thomas, 1997: 48). It's gotten to the point where even the draft is being considered.

In a situation of full integration, women would be subject to the same draft as men. In 1980, President Jimmy Carter suggested a plan to make women subject to the draft. That suggestion didn't go far. "Deeply rooted American beliefs that it was a man's role to fight and not a woman's" overruled that plan (Trainor, 1997: 63). However, this idea is being reborn in the form of a report released by GAO on June 30, 1998. In the report, it was found that more women would be eligible than men - 14.4 million versus 13 million (Daniel, 1998: 19).

Summary

The three primary issues of sexual interaction, training, and combat do present obstacles to full integration when analyzed. Adjustments in thinking and policy must be made with the presence of women in previously all-male units.

Current policies, such as those for sexual harassment and fraternization, are examples of such adjustments. The extent to which women become perceived as "one of the guys" is the extent to which they are accepted after the initial acclimatization period. This period would be much less arduous if the women have completed the same rigorous prerequisite training as the men in support of the fact that they have a right to fight side by side with their male counterparts.

V. Full Integration: Myth or Possibility?

Introduction

Towards the beginning of this study, certain investigative questions were proposed in order to provide a conclusion on the status of full integration of women in the Air Force. A summary of the responses to these investigative questions is provided to facilitate conclusions.

Investigative Questions

#1 - What is meant by the term "full integration"?

For the purposes of this thesis, "full integration" is allowing all military personnel the opportunity to hold any position and accomplish any mission, given that they are in possession of the required capabilities and training for that mission, without restriction. This definition was compiled based on an analysis of previous studies and current data. An adoption of this definition by the Air Force would force a new look at previous integration success claims and force new measures to be considered other than just looking at overall percentages of women in the Air Force.

#2 - What have previous studies, conducted mostly after the Desert Storm/Desert Shield deployment, concluded about the status of women in the military, particularly the Air Force?

The previous studies have shown that there are certain primary issues that are controversial in the gender integration arena. One is the questioning of the capability of women to perform the same tasks as men. The second is the influence non-military persons such as wives and other dependents on the male military members' perceptions of their female counterparts. A third is the gender issue, which leads to problems such as sexual harassment, intimate relations that can be detrimental to a unit's performance, and considerations such as pregnancy. The fourth is the training issue. Inequitable training standards will lead to an inequity in perceptions if it is felt that standards are being lowered to promote the fulfillment of quotas.

#3 - What are the issues surrounding the full integration of women in the Air Force as defined within the context of this thesis?

There are three primary issues involved in the concept of women's complete integration into the ranks. The issues are sex, as defined by gender and function, the capability of women to accomplish the same tasks as men, and the combat issue. These primary issues were the main issues addressed that have more of an impact on integration efforts.

#4 - How are these issues affecting full integration efforts?

The three primary issues of sexual interaction, training, and combat do present obstacles to full integration when analyzed. Adjustments in thinking and policy must be made with the presence of women in previously all-male units. Current policies, such as those for sexual harassment and fraternization, are

examples of such adjustments. The extent to which women become perceived as "one of the guys" is the extent to which they are accepted after the initial acclimatization period. This period would be much less arduous if the women have completed the same rigorous prerequisite training as the men and regulation and law didn't support perceived gender weaknesses (such as the ability to perform in combat situations).

Conclusion

The issues affecting integration efforts will not go away until certain policy changes are made. Based on the definition of "full integration" given earlier on in this report, it is evident that:

1. The qualifications of female military personnel are being called into question based on perceived limited capabilities and substandard training.
2. All qualified military personnel are not being given the same opportunities.

For women, the capabilities are present to accomplish the tasks assigned. Yet, these capabilities aren't being exploited in the form of adequate training. If a male soldier is required to lift a certain number of pounds or demonstrate some other physical capability in order to meet the requirements of war, then the female soldier should be required to do the same. Wars are not segregated to accommodate differences in capabilities. Rather, the weaker unit or members of the unit will be sought by the enemy as a method of crippling the whole. A unit's

mission-readiness will be severely impacted if there are training inequalities which result in some in the unit receiving substandard training. If the unit is only as strong as the weakest link, this will lead to an overall substandard unit performance. The gap between training standards for men and women fosters this difference in capabilities and maintains the perception of the incapability of women to accomplish certain jobs. A gradual diminishing of this gap will be beneficial in the long run. If women require more training to meet a higher standard, it will be worth the added cost to prevent future deficiencies on the job or on the battlefield.

For now, women are being given a qualified rating that is not sufficient for certain combat-related positions. This reflects a perceived deficiency in their capabilities and/or training - a stance that is supported in an editorial on the role of women in the military. Military women are deemed "more costly and less combat-capable than [military men]" (Metcalf, 1997: 5).

The issue of sex is also pertinent to the discussion of capabilities. Pregnancies, or the chance of pregnancies, cannot be allowed in a deployment situation. Besides the added costs to the unit, there is the added risk to the child and the mother in such a situation. Currently, it is easy to put the pregnant military female on the first plane home, but what happens when the situation is wartime reality and not an exercise?

Men and women working in close quarters should not have any negative or inhibitive effects on the mission. "Surveys found that as units got closer to combat, they began to forget about male-female differences" (Barry and Thomas,

1997: 49). If they are trained together as a unit and sufficient steps are taken to prohibit relations within the unit, problems can be prevented.

Today, it would be hard to back out of integration efforts, as certain extremists would like the military to do. The military has incorporated women to the extent whereby its operations would be severely affected if they were barred from it at this time.

Recommendations

Future study is recommended in the area of training and combat capabilities. Decreasing the gap in the training standards for the genders should be monitored to determine the rate of success and its effects on morale and mission accomplishment. Attention should be paid to combat specified positions to determine whether they will become available to women with the requisite training. The President and top military leaders are continually requisitioning reports on the status of the forces. Reading these future reports on women in the military will provide valuable insight as well as current status on the woman's role in the military.

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Vita

First Lieutenant Helen M. Newell was born on 3 April 1971 in Kingston, Jamaica. She graduated from White Plains High School in White Plains, New York in June 1989. She pursued her undergraduate degree at Pace University in White Plains, New York graduating with a Bachelor in Business Administration in the field of Accounting in May 1993. She was commissioned through Officer Training School in Class 95-03 on 17 March 1995.

Her first assignment was at Cannon AFB, New Mexico in April 1995. There, she served as a Flight Commander for the Materiel Storage and Distribution Flight in the 27th Supply Squadron. While stationed at Cannon, she was chosen to be the Supply Officer in Charge of supply support for Red Flag 97-1 for six weeks at Nellis AFB, Nevada in October 1996. In May 1997, she entered the Graduate Supply Management program, School of Logistics and Acquisition Management, Air Force Institute of Technology. Upon graduation, she will be assigned to Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.

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